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ABSTRACT

Two studies were conducted to explore the convergent and divergent validity of the Psychosocial Maturity (PSM) Inventory. The Individual Adequacy subscales were found to be highly related to measures of personal adjustment while the Social Adequacy and Interpersonal Adequacy subscales showed lower correlations with these measures. The results indicate that the Individual Adequacy scales demonstrate the concept-predicted association with personal well-being. Furthermore, the results demonstrate the distinctiveness of the Individual Adequacy scales from the others. (Author)

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Report No. 199

June 1975

ON THE VALIDITY OF THE PSYCHOSOCIAL MATURITY INVENTORY: RELATIONSHIP TO MEASURES OF PERSONAL WELL-BEING

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Introductory Statement

The Center for Social Organization of Schools has two primary objectives: to develop a scientific knowledge of how schools affect their students, and to use this knowledge to develop better school practices and organization.

The Center works through three programs to achieve its objectives. The Schools and Maturity program is studying the effects of School, family, and peer group experiences on the development of attitudes consistent with psychosocial maturity. The program has developed the Psychosocial Maturity (PSM) Inventory for the assessment of adolescent social, individual and interpersonal adequacy. The objectives are to formulate, assess, and research important educational goals other than traditional academic achievement. The School Organization program is currently concerned with authority-control structures, task structures, reward systems, and peer group processes in schools. It has produced a large-scale study of the effects of open schools, developed the Teams-Games-Tournament (TGT) instructional process for teaching various subjects in elementary and secondary schools, and produced a computerized system for school-wide attendance monitoring. The Careers program (formerly Careers and Curricula) bases its work upon a theory of career development. It has developed a self-administered vocational guidance device and a self-directed career program to promote vocational development and to foster satisfying curricular decisions for high school, college, and adult populations.

This report, prepared by the Schools and Maturity Program, examines the validity of the Individual Adequacy subscales of the Psychosocial Maturity (PSM) Inventory.

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to further investigate the convergent and divergent validity of the Psychosocial Maturity (PSM) Inventory. The model of psychosocial maturity described by Greenberger and Sørensen (1974) postulates that maturity consists of three general capacities which correspond to the demands made on the individual by society. These capacities are: (1) Individual Adequacy -- the capacity to function effectively on one's own; (2) Interpersonal Adequacy -- the capacity to interact satisfactorily with others; and (3) Social Adequacy -- the capacity to sustain and contribute to membership in one's society. The Psychosocial Maturity Inventory contains nine scales, three for each of the generalized capacities described above. Table 1 presents the scales and subscales with brief descriptions of the traits.

The Individual Adequacy and Social Adequacy scales have been found to be most useful in measuring the concept of psychosocial maturity, and this paper will focus on these. Individual Adequacy consists of three subscales: Work Orientation, Self-Reliance and Identity. Social Adequacy is defined by Social Commitment, Tolerance, and Openness to Social and Political Change.[1]

Previous studies have documented that the Psychosocial Maturity Inventory does measure the traits it purports to measure. The Inventory has been shown to reflect developmental change and to be unrelated to social desirability (Greenberger, Knerr, Knerr and Brown, 1974) and to discriminate among students rated high and low on the psychosocial maturity traits by their teachers (Josselson, Greenberger and McConochie,

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[1] See Greenberger and Sørensen (1974) for a complete description.

1974). In addition, the Social Adequacy subscales have been shown to discriminate between students actively engaged in volunteer social action programs and those not participating in such activity (Bond, Josselson, Greenberger and McConochie, 1974).

To further examine the network of relationships between the Psychosocial Maturity Inventory and other measures of attitudes and behavior, the present study focuses on the Individual Adequacy subscales. Central to the concept of Individual Adequacy is the contention that the effective individual functioning measured by these scales both reflects and results in better psychological adjustment. Persons high in Individual Adequacy should value themselves and, because of their greater personal resources, should be better able to cope with stress. The hypothesis to be tested in this study is that those who score high on the Individual Adequacy subscales of the Psychosocial Maturity Inventory will also score high on other measures of personal adjustment and well-being.

A second intention of this study is to demonstrate that the Individual Adequacy subscales measure different traits than do the Social Adequacy subscales. Previous research (Greenberger, Josselson, Knerr and Knerr, 1975) has shown that the Individual and Social Adequacy scales are correlated on the order of .44 to .60. While there is much theoretical basis for believing that Individual Adequacy and personal adjustment are related, there is no a priori reason to suppose that Social Adequacy and personal adjustment are direct correlates of one another. Therefore, a second hypothesis is that measures of personal adjustment will have less relationship to Social Adequacy than they do to Individual Adequacy.

The Interpersonal Adequacy subscales, while not relevant to the major hypotheses of this study, are included in the design so that we may explore their relationships to measures of personal adjustment and well-being. Previous factorial studies of the structure of the Psychosocial Maturity Inventory indicate that one Interpersonal Adequacy subscale, Communication Skills, clusters with the Individual Adequacy subscales, while the other two subscales may be linked with either the Individual or Social Adequacy scales (Greenberger, Knerr, Knerr and Brown, 1974).

Two separate investigations, using different measures of personal adjustment, have been carried out to test these hypotheses.

Study I

Subjects

Subjects were 68 students, aged 16 and 17, who were entering a specialized "early college" which accepts students who have completed the 10th grade of high school. The sample included 48 girls and 20 boys; most of the subjects came from well-to-do families.

Method

Form B of the Psychosocial Maturity Inventory was administered to all subjects. The measures of personal adjustment were obtained by administering the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (Fitts, 1965). This test yields scores on overall Self-Esteem, Identity, Self-Satisfaction, General Maladjustment and Neurosis, as well as other scores which were not of interest

in this study. Correlations were obtained between the Individual Adequacy, Interpersonal Adequacy and Social Adequacy subscales of the Psychosocial Maturity Inventory and the Tennessee Self-Concept scores.

Results

All three Individual Adequacy subscales were found to have moderate relationships to the Tennessee Self-Concept measures[1], while the Social Adequacy subscales have almost no relationship to these measures. Results are presented in Table 2.

Of the three Individual Adequacy subscales, Identity has the highest correlation with the Tennessee Scales. Neuroticism (scoring reversed) and Self-Esteem each account for one-quarter of the variance in the Identity subscale. The Self-Reliance subscale shows the lowest correlations of the Individual Adequacy subscales with the Tennessee measures, all in the range of .19 - .22. Work Orientation is more strongly related to the Tennessee scales than is Self-Reliance.

The Interpersonal Adequacy subscales show more association with the Tennessee scales than do the Social Adequacy subscales, but they are less related to these measures than are the Individual Adequacy subscales. Communication, in particular, shows moderate positive correlations with the Tennessee Self-Esteem (TP) and Identity (RlP) measures, and a moderate negative correlation with Neuroticism (N).

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[1]The Tennessee Self-Concept measures were found to be highly interrelated. Therefore, we made no effort to interpret the patterns of relationships between the PSM scales and particular Tennessee scales. Instead we view the Tennessee scales as reflecting general overall adjustment.

Study II

Subjects

Subjects were 192 high school juniors, aged 16 - 18, in a suburban high school. The group was approximately evenly composed of girls and boys. The social class background of these students was largely working class, and most of the subjects were white.

Method

All subjects were administered Form C of the Psychosocial Maturity Inventory.[1] Appended to this questionnaire were the items from the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Questionnaire (Rosenberg, 1965) and the Welsh Anxiety Scale (Welsh, 1956).

Results

The results, presented in Table 3, support the hypothesis that the Individual Adequacy subscales reflect overall personal adjustment. Identity has the highest positive correlation with self-esteem and the highest negative correlation with anxiety. Self-reliance is more highly related to self-esteem than is Work Orientation, while Work is more highly related, in a negative direction, to anxiety.

Although the Social Adequacy subscales are somewhat correlated with self-esteem, they are uncorrelated with anxiety. The Individual Adequacy subscales are more strongly positively correlated with both self-esteem and more strongly negatively correlated with anxiety than are the Social Adequacy subscales.

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[1] Form C is a short form of the Psychosocial Maturity Inventory which has been shown to correlate in the range of .89 - .94 with Form B, the long form.

Of the Interpersonal Adequacy subscales, Communication and Enlightened Trust are both moderately correlated with self-esteem, but neither is more highly correlated with self-esteem than is the Identity scale. Only Communication has more than a small (negative) correlation with anxiety.

Discussion and Summary

The results support the hypothesis that the Individual Adequacy subscales reflect general personal adjustment. The Identity subscale, which in its design is most closely tied to overall positive feelings about and definition of the self, is most highly related to all of the personal adjustment measures.

The results also demonstrate the divergence of the Individual and Social Adequacy subscales. Although it has been shown that the Individual Adequacy and Social Adequacy scales are moderately correlated (Greenberger, Josselson, Knerr and Knerr, 1975) this study demonstrates that what variance they do share is not accounted for by overall personal adjustment.

The Interpersonal Adequacy subscales show a more complex relationship to the personal adjustment measures. The Communication Skills subscale appears to behave much like the Individual Adequacy subscales, as noted elsewhere (Greenberger, Josselson, Knerr and Knerr, 1975), while the Trust and Roles subscales show patterns of correlations similar to the Social Adequacy subscales. The Individual Adequacy subscales, therefore, are clearly distinguishable from all other subscales of the Psychosocial Maturity Inventory except for Communication.

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Table 1

Detailed Model of Psychosocial Maturity[a]

Individual Adequacy:

- Self-Reliance
  - absence of excessive need for social validation
  - sense of control
  - initiative
- Work Orientation
  - general work skills
  - standards of competence
  - pleasure in work
- Identity
  - clarity of self-concept
  - consideration of life goals
  - self-esteem
  - internalized values

Interpersonal Adequacy:

- Communication Skills
  - ability to encode messages
  - ability to decode messages
  - empathy
- Enlightened Trust
  - rational dependence
  - rejection of simplistic views of human nature
  - awareness of constraints on trustworthiness
- Knowledge of Major Roles
  - role-appropriate behavior
  - management of role conflict

Social Adequacy:

- Social Commitment
  - feelings of community
  - willingness to modify personal goals in favor of social goals
  - readiness to form alliances
  - interest in long-term social goals
- Openness to Socio-political Change
  - general openness to change
  - recognition of costs of status quo
  - recognition of costs of change
- Tolerance of Individual and Cultural Differences
  - willingness to interact with people who differ from the norm
  - sensitivity to the rights of people who differ from the norm
  - awareness of costs and benefits of tolerance

[a]Reprinted from Greenberger et.al. (1974).

Table 2

Correlations of PSM Scores with Tennessee Self Concept Measures

(n = 68)

Psychosocial Maturity Inventory Scales	Tennessee Self Concept Scales				
	Self-Esteem (TP)	Identity (R1P)	Self-Satisfaction (R2P)	Neuroticism[a] (N)	General[a] Maladjustment (GM)
Individual Adequacy					
Work	.36	.32	.31	-.38	-.24
Self Reliance	.22	.19	.20	-.21	-.20
Identity	.50	.38	.46	-.52	-.39
Individual Adequacy Summary Score	.41	.34	.37	-.42	-.31
Interpersonal Adequacy[b]					
Communication Skills	.30	.27	.21	-.29	-.25
Roles	.15	.26	.08	-.02	-.18
Enlightened Trust	.10	.09	.09	-.10	-.17
Social Adequacy					
Social Commitment	.07	.14	.03	-.08	-.05
Tolerance	.09	.10	.06	-.08	-.11
Openness to Change	.06	.09	.03	-.06	-.11
Social Adequacy Summary Score	.08	.14	.04	-.09	-.11

[a]For Neuroticism and General Maladjustment, high scores indicate a low level of the trait. To clarify the direction of the correlations in relation to the other scales, the positive correlations for these two scales are presented as negative correlations.

[b]Summary scores are not computed for Interpersonal Adequacy

Table 3

Correlations of PSM Scores with Self Esteem and Anxiety Measures

(n = 192)

Psychosocial Maturity Inventory Scales	Rosenberg Self Esteem[a]	Welsh Anxiety Scale[b]
Individual Adequacy		
Work	.22	-.32
Self Reliance	.29	-.24
Identity	.53	-.40
Individual Adequacy Summary Score	.44	-.41
Interpersonal Adequacy		
Communication Skills	.38	-.18
Roles	.08	-.01
Enlightened Trust	.29	.04
Social Adequacy		
Social Commitment	.19	-.03
Tolerance	.10	.05
Openness to Change	.19	-.02
Social Adequacy Summary Score	.20	.00

[a]High scores indicate low self-esteem on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale. To clarify the direction of the correlations in relation to the Welsh Anxiety Scale, the negative correlations for the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale are presented as positive correlations.

[b]High scores indicate high anxiety.